

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the non-final Office Action dated February 23, 2004 (Paper No./Mail Date 02222005). The present Amendment cancels claims 13-17 and 19-21 in favor of pursuing their allowance in a separately-filed continuation application. No new matter has been added. The Title of the application has also been amended to correct an error on the part of the Patent Office.

Restriction & Election of Species

The examiner's acknowledgment of Applicant's election of Group II (claims 6-9, 13-17 and 19-21) with traverse is noted with appreciation. The subject matter of Groups I (withdrawn claims 1-5 and 10) and III (withdrawn claims 11, 12 and 18) will be pursued in separately-filed divisional applications.

Allowable Subject Matter and Claim Objections

The Applicant thanks the examiner for recognizing claims 6-9 as containing allowable subject matter. Rejected claims 13, 16, 17 and 19-21 and objected-to claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled by this Amendment in favor of pursuing their allowance in a separately-filed continuation application. Prompt allowance of the remaining claims in this application, namely claims 6-9, is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Action, claims 13, 16, 17 and 19-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,324,149 to Mifune et al. ("Mifune"). This rejection is respectfully traversed. However, in order to expedite prosecution, claims 13, 16, 17 and 19-21 have been cancelled in favor of pursuing allowance of the same in a separately-filed continuation application. Thus, this rejection has been mooted, and withdrawal thereof is courteously solicited.

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If the examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SON-2220, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: March 30, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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